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HOLD REDMERE



KOLA BEAUFRE, a tale.

by Thomas Wood Stevens
and Alden Charles Noble.

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New Jersey, M C M I.

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Here begins *Hold Redmere; A Tale*, *Hold*
by Thomas Wood Stevens and Alden *Red-*
Charles Noble; but first is the verse, *mere*
To Helen: A Dedication.



IT *H* ghostly rain in our
faces flung,

We cross in the wind
the moors of Time,
And clamoring challenge
the Elder Gard —

Brave in his cloak is the foolish mime—
And we walk the crimson house of the
past

With a step that startles a wraith of
rhyme.

So shall we come 'mid old regards —

A love-knot faded, a tarnished sword,
The rack and wheel, and trusted cross,

Hold And roistering cup, and worthless
Red- hoard;
mere Lutes long unstrung, and fairest dead,
And a grisly stain by a ghostly ford.

Yea, in the twilight days of earth
Immortal loves burned clear and high;
Sweet ladies lived & strong men fought,
And honour kept the right to die:
Take then our tale of ancient dreams —
A paean, sinking to a sigh.

And here begins the tale of **HOLD** **Redmere.**

Hold
Red-
mere



Befell in the year after Baron Robert had done building Hold Redmere, the third of his castles, that he let cry a great hunt in the North forest, nigh to the holdings of the Venables line. Whereupon he moved into Hold Redmere his house-

hold, with all housings & gear that they might carry quick, for the Baron let no man delay him — nor woman either, saving only the Lady Cedilia, his daughter.

for two days there plied companies between the castles, under demand of Elbantel the Saxon, who was the seneschal, fetching the wherewithal to maintain a fitting house. Meanwhile Baron


Hold Robert rode hardily in the wood, and
Red- cursed the seneschal and all his weary
mere train, – albeit my lord was glad to ride
light across the marches in the purple
cool of Michaelmas-tide. On the second
day came the Lady Cedilia, and the bux-
om lady Erica her cousin, and Sir Ormus
de Dauenporte and Geraul his squire, &
many others of my lord's folk, trailing
over the hills and merry for the hunt that
had been cried to be in the North forest.

So came they to Hold Redmere, and
the new halls were filled with scurrying
& cheer; green things were scattered, and
laughter rang where the craftsmen had
just done carving on the oaken panelings.
A fine house was Hold Redmere: high
and grey and stern, with many towers
and a clear moat; and in it were many
winding ways, so that scarce any man
yet knew them all. Within, it echoed

bravely. New rushes were on the floors, and into the great hall might four men ride abreast. Hold Redmere lay far to the north in Baron Robert's holdings, and men whispered strange things of its building. Belike, they said, the old falcon of Redmere will stoop upon the King's land beyond the North forest, and seize truage and entail that is now these many years the King's. But these things no man dared say when Robert was by, unless it were young Sir Ormus. And Sir Ormus cared not, nor bespoke him about it. Often, when the stones were being set, came Sir John Venables with some of his gentlemen clattering and cursing merrily, to look at the place. And once the gentlemen chaffed him as he stood looking, saying that his was a waiting eye upon the house. Sir John said nought, & his comrade in arms, young Sir Hubert

Hold
Red-
mere

Hold de la Cote Dargent, quoth lightly that Sir
Red- John might look to win the castle if so
mere be as he could win the Lady Cedilia, that
rumor spoke most fair & And that his
hope might be the greater since Sir Hugh
Bechamps, to whom she had these many
years been betrothed, had lately died in
the Holy Land. Then was Sir John wroth,
and knit his brows and turned his horse
fiercely away & So they followed, nor
cared to rail at him when he was in so
evil a mood.

 **T**HE hunt in the North forest
prospered well, and the cheer
was high in the castle. For
two days all rode steadily,
and many arrows were not
sped in vain. Then for that night
Baron Robert and all his folk
feasted, and red Norman wines flowed

free as English ale; and through the halls might one smell whiffs of roasting deer and boar and bird, & Baron Robert was merry, and sat at the great board as he had been a Saxon, flinging now & then a mug of ale down the table at Elbantel, playfully and for pure mirth. And Elbantel raised a wassail, as his people use. Betimes Robert nodded and lay across the board. And others likewise, save those who fell under it. But Sir Ormus drank sparingly, and afterwhile he led the Lady Cedilia, who drank not at all — wherefore was she of a pale snow-drift beauty — out upon a buttress of hewn stone.

There they sat with their feet swinging, and watched the moon's mail glisten on the moat-water. And Sir Ormus would have taken her in his arms, and her head to lie upon his shoulder, but she

Hold
Red-
mere

Hold would not have it so. Sir Ormus loved
Red- her passingly, and for her he had left his
mere heritage & given his keep to his brother
for holding, only to be near her among
the Baron Robert's folk. This night, the
longing moon-spirit being within him, he
yearned to her lips, and she put him off,
sighing. Later came the lady Erica to sit
with them, swearing lustily that a man
had tried to buss her in the passage. And
there was an end of the other's dream-
ing.



THERE was no hunting
on the third day, because
they feasted late, and the
dawn aroused nobody.
But the next morning the
Baron came thundering
into the courtyard, & his muscles itched
for clear ways and galloping. Whereat

the squires and pages were set into a merry haste among the horses and bows. But when the company was nigh gathered, and there was neighing and laughter and playful cursing, so that the walls rang with eagerness, came the winding of a horn across the moat. The Baron rode out on the bascule, & welcomed Sir John Venables, who came with Sir Hubert de la Cote Dargent and some train besides, to pay neighborly duty to my lord.

Hold
Red-
mere

They were a goodly crew, light-armed and glittering, with clean, lithe horses. And at their head rode Sir John, whom having seen, no man might mistake: being of a dark, Italian cast, with curling black hair, and a young silken beard; very wide of body, yet lean and full of sinew; ready of eye & bold of speech, yet smooth in courtesy. And in all the north of Eng-

Hold land few knights of King Stephen's day
Red- could match with him. A jupon of green
mere velvet he wore, with facings and tippets
of otter's skin, and a light coat of link
mail thereunder.

The Baron was more than common
gracious to Sir John, and embraced him
heartily. So they all joined in the hunt,
and the mingled troops rode merrily all
day together; ere night they rallied at
Hold Redmere, & made ready for a hearty
carousal around the great board. And it
chanced that my lord liked Sir John well,
and Sir John bespoke him fair, & Anon
they talked openly of the Lady Cedilia, &
Hold Redmere with its lands for a jointure. & So Sir John, seeing good winds
to blow in his sails, asked of the Baron
his daughter, that was not now betrothed,
to wife; saying only that as yet he had
never seen her.

"Nay," quoth my lord, "wilt thou marry a strange maid in a dark church?"

Hold
Red-
mere

"If she be of thy blood," answered Sir John boldly.

Then my lord slapped the knight's shoulder heartily, and swore it was a good day in a long year; and that he should see the wench and give a sign of his liking. But wit ye well Sir John knew the maid was fair.

Now the lady Erica, who was ever an eager maiden of quick wit and small prudence, hearing that Sir John had returned to sup, though she knew nought of the truth in the matter, declared to Cedilia that he was come as her knight, to wed her because she was Baron Robert's child. Which the Lady Cedilia disavowed; she was not like to be married, quoth she, out of her own wishing and choosing. Natheless she tired her hair

Hold with pearls & sat in silks for no reason
Red- at all, she said, save her own fancy.

mere Came a page from Baron Robert, and told her tire-woman that my lord required his daughter's presence in the hall, & Whereat she rose & went to the window to look at the moon, pouting. Now hot upon the page's heels came Elbantel, and bespoke her fearingly, saying that my lord and Sir John Venables, his guest, awaited her coming. So then she went, the lady Erica following. Elbantel and two pages bore bright candles by her as she had been a saint; and proudly she swept into the hall and paused, gazing across the board at the Baron's face. Thus stoled in shimmering silks she stood, and the pearls glowed in her midnight hair; but not so pale were the pearls as her white throat, nor so fair as the quick rose-leaves in her cheeks; and in her

eyes a challenge burned.

Hold
Red-
mere

Baron Robert turned from her to Sir John, and she might not mistake the glance. & Then came Sir John slowly across to where she stood, & kneeled him humbly at her feet, and took her hand to kiss it. So for a moment he kneeled, and rose, holding still her hand in his; then most courteously he embraced her and kissed her brow. Sir Ormus de Dauenporte his goblet fell clanging to the floor where he stood beside the table, but he did not move. The Lady Cedilia looked into Sir John's eyes as if she had known him long, and strangely pale she grew. Her bosom heaved, yet she denied him not. Suddenly she turned and went again to her chamber, leaving them all a-staring. And there she sat long and looked out at stars in the moat; sometimes weeping, & sometimes laughing low.

Hold
Red-
mere



OR in a year far back, when her body was just waxing round toward womanhood, and her fancy still played quick & foolish as a child's Cedilia had dreamed of such a meeting, & of a strong, dark man of Sir John's very seeming. What time her hand was pledged to Sir Hugh Bechamps, albeit by the dream she knew that never would she be his bride.

And often in the night she had walked with phantom candles about her, and pearls heavy in her hair; coming always into a great dark-hung hall where many folk stood waiting; always she knew herself to pause and gaze across to where her father stood; & always a lusty, green-clad knight with straight black brows came slowly & made salutation. Then the

the fog of sleep had ever shifted, so that she was by that knight in merry woodland ways. And she could see the sun through the partings of the trees, and the golden mottlings on the dead leaves that covered the floor of the forest like dried blood; or they fared homeward when the yare good winds lashed their faces so that the bright stars pierced through tears. And always was this knight by her ¶ Anon they danced to unearthly tunes, amid a merry rout in a hall where great fires blazed. ¶ And in the dance a fool came clamoring & shook his bells in her face, crying that the Lady Cedilia, who danced so blithely now, would soon be a fat old wife by another hearth; but she only smiled, and the dark eyes that alone were real to her smiled also. Then came other pageantry of dreams.

¶ She bound a favor from her gown

Hold
Red-
mere

Hold upon a helm that gleamed blue of steel,
Red- and then she watched the helm, that never
mere wavered in hardy courses; & because the
helm fell not she was glad, albeit many
whom she knew went down before it.

Anon she sat with him and men played
before them masques and miracles: how
the saints bore them when they were alive
and the ways of froward devils; proces-
sions of strange kings, & witches in pain.
✿ The masque turned to open lanes and
fields of daisies under fair skies, where
they walked with sweet upliftings of
spring's ichor in their hearts. Or it was
night, and a warm red moon strewed
the grey silent sea with eager little
flames. Sometimes her hand in his trem-
bled, but it was not afraid.

✿ But always at the last there was a
corner of great walls, & the white face of
a haggard boy in a cowl; and shuddering,

shrill cries that woke her, shuddering too.

Hold
Red-
mere



O **W** it was nigh three
years since first this
knight of the vision came
to woo her in her sleep.
She had told nor witch nor
any reader of dreams, be-

ing maidenly & not proud of her lovers,
and more secret of those she knew not.
But Sir Ormus she told, since him she
liked well, and felt doleful sometimes
that she could never love him as he
would have her do. And Sir Ormus
knew when first her eyes lit at Sir
John's sight, that it was a love-light,
and that her dream was found.

And so with Sir John she wandered
now through the fields in the bright fall
weather, and the skies were blue above.
Sir John gave over the hunting and set

Hold himself to woo and learn the heart of
Red- this maid that was to be his. When that
mere many days had passed thus, & Sir John
was urging her that they might be swift-
ly wed, and she denying him from pure
maidenliness, and Baron Robert cursing
roundly at the utter simpleness of wom-
an, that thing came to be which Cedilia
had awaited. for though Sir John was
a strong knight, and like in all ways to
the love of her dreams, yet she wondered
still what might mean that last vision,
that dark, terrible imagery of swift
strokes, loud cries, and the stain of
blood.

On this day the hunt had ended, for
there had been snow, and the sport was
not good. The riders came back early
and all were a-weary of the hunting. So,
sulky and silent, they rode up to the
castle and into the courtyard. & Where

came presently the Lady Cedilia, attired **Hold**
to ride, for the sun was yet high. Whom **Red-**
Sir John awaited, and ere they brought **mere**
forth her horse he talked with her in the
arch-way. While they talked there drew
near an acolyte from the chapel, & told
Sir John that a monk asked speech of
him.

“Beshrew him,” quoth the knight, “I
care not!”

“He hath waited all the day,” said the
acolyte.

The Lady Cedelia looked Sir John
full sweetly in the eyes, so that he for-
got all, watching her. She asked of him
that he should see this monk; and forth-
with he demanded that the monk be sent
to him. He drew aside, to the angle of
the keep, where none could hear, and held
speech with the man, who came clad in a
monkish robe and cowl of goodly full-

Hold ness; the Lady Cedilia watching them
Red- the while.

mere The monk she could not well see, save only that he was of slight stature, and spoke wildly as one distraught; but Sir John's voice was deep, & he turned soon away as if he had been angry, bending his steps toward her. The monk followed, stretching out his lean hand as like to stay him, and his face was to Cedilia. She saw and remembered; for it was the gaunt youth with blazing eyes, as she had dreamed aforetime.

"Thou graceless devil," cried the monk, his voice haunting shrill, "wilt thou — I say to thee — wilt thou —"

Sir John turned again thereat, and with a stride was upon him. His mighty hands gripped the youth's throat, shaking him like a rat. Then he shook no longer, but only held hard. He loosed

his grip, and the robe sank into a grisly **Hold**
heap, one arm lying straight out. And **Red-**
from the dead face a serpent of blood **mere**
sneaked out over the snow. The Lady
Cedilia clung to the cold casement, and
her knees scarce bore her up.

"Ruel," quoth Sir John to his squire,
"take thou away this carrion!" Turned
he then to the portal, and beheld Cedilia
there, and to her he came straightway,
as ready to let her know the cause of
such strange & bloody doings. But she
shrank from him & stood up proud and
wild.

"Get hence, thou graceless," she cried
hoarsely.

"He was no monk —"

"I care not!"

"He was only a starveling clerk, that
wore a cowl to cheat them that wear
swords."

Hold
Red-
mere

"He was unarmed and unshriven!
Thou hast slain him so."

"My lady —"

"Begone! Thou art no good knight.
I will not have ado with thee more.
Never — I nor my house!"

Then, weeping silently, she went from him to seek the Baron Robert, or Sir Ormus, or the lady Erica, — she cared not which she might find.



STRAIGHT to the hall she went; her face was pale save for two red patches that flamed in her cheeks for anger, or mayhap for maiden shame at things past with Sir John. Every kiss that he had set upon her lips pressed again and stung her. The Baron Robert she came upon where he was

among his hounds, and of him she demanded that he should listen.

"Wit ye, my father," quoth she, "I will have nought ado with this Sir John Venables that thou hast chosen for me."

Whereat was he bereft of speech for wonder, so that he answered her nothing.

"I have seen," she cried pitifully, "and I will none of him. He hath here most foully slain a monk that defended not himself. & Nor cleanly hath he done this with steel, but with his hands only, like a beast. And me may the Virgin help, an thou sendest him not away."

"Blood of Saint Andrew! They have lied to thee. He is a good knight & thou shalt wed him, or deny him at the price of thy skin."

"Nay, I saw him do this killing."

"The jointure makes a great holding in the north —"

Hold
Red-
mere

Hold
Red-
mere

“Ah, my father, forget thou entails, and bethink thee of thy child and thine honour. There lies the unshriven corse in the courtyard.”

She fell at his feet, moaning with sheer pain and the great fear that was on her. He strode back & forth through the hall many times, and still she wept. Then he went out and took a horse, and rode over the marches, muttering and spurring hard. & The sun fell, and the blood-stains from earth crept up into the sky. Baron Robert turned his horse's head at length, and came hard homing to Hold Redmere.



MEANTWHILE as he Hold
was gone, came Sir Or- Red-
mus de Dauenporte and mere
found Cedilia there
weeping beneath a win-
dow. In all the while
since first Sir John had come to the cas-
tle, had Sir Ormus avoided her, mislik-
ing to make his sorrow brave before her.
Yet in his eyne had she seen yearning
whensoever they had met, and grief also.
Now finding her weeping, his love grew
hot again, & he made bold to come and
bespeak her kindly, touching the reason
for her tears.

For some while she might not answer
for sobbing, & he lifted her up tenderly;
she wept with her face against his
shoulder, so that his heart was wild
within him.

¶ "I pray
thee, my lady, tell me what grieveth

Hold thee," he besought her; and at last she
Red- said, very low:

mere "I grieve me that he, that I denied thee for, is unworthy. And because I am betrothed to Sir John Venables, whom I love not, & belike my father will make me wed him. And that I have caused thee sorrow, and that my dreams have come to truth as their worst foretold."

She wept awhile longer, and clasped her fingers about his hand. "And he hath foully slain a boy that came weaponless to him, and the blood crawled along the snow — and for him I denied thee!"

Albeit Sir Ormus was wroth with Sir John at that, he was glad within him that his lady turned to him again. And he took her in his arms, comforting her as he might, kissing her hair, & asking

what she would have him do,— for that **Hold**
would be, though he died. & At that she **Red-**
lifted up her face and besought him by **mere**
his love that he should see that Sir John
free her of her promise to wed with him.
Sir Ormus swore that he would do it if
the power therefor lay in his body; upon
his knightly honour he swore it. He
kissed her lips, and she denied him not.



O he went to seek the Baron
Robert and John Venables;
of whom the first had not
yet come back, and the other
he found in the courtyard
with his squire, who had
just done burying the dead body of the
monk.

“Wit ye, Sir John Venables,” quoth
Sir Ormus, “that no longer shalt thou
abide in this house; and that the Lady

Hold Cedília will see thee never again!"

**Red-
mere** Sir John glared at him fiercely under his straight black brows, & bespoke him scornfully.

"Speakest thou, sirrah, for my lord of Redmere, or out of thine own beggarly brain-pan? 'Tis an ill day when Baron Robert chooseth thee to send away his guests!"

"I speak for my sweet lady Cedília, and I will make good my word with my body."

"Bring me to thy master for an answer!"

"As I am thy peer in arms, I defy thee. & Thou art attainted of unclean murder."

In through the gate came the Baron riding; and stopped, seeing some ado amongst the people in the courtyard.

"Thou liest, thou hound," cried Sir

John, & he flung his gage on the ground between them. Sir Ormus sprang forward to take it up. But ere he could reach it the Baron Robert rode over it, checking his horse & defending the gage with his sword. **Hold Redmere**

“Let it lie,” quoth he sternly. “I forbid it to ye all! Sir John Venables, I pray thee let this matter carry no further.”

“My horse,” said Sir John to his squire. “Is it true, my lord, that thy daughter meaneth to break faith with me?”

“Be that as my daughter will,” said the Baron, and no man might misread the words.

“My lord, I bid ye farewell,” said Sir John coldly.

Baron Robert bowed and saluted him with his sword. Sir John's folk gather-

Hold ed about him, making ready with their
Red- horses to depart. And Sir Hubert de la
mere Cote Dargent came to Sir Ormus, and
spoke low to him, saying :

“If thou wilt come to the bare dune
to the north of the river, an hour ere the
moon sets, I will engage thou wilt find
them there that will give thee welcome.”

“I will come,” said Sir Ormus.

So they rode away and left the Baron
still mounting guard over the gage.
When they were gone he dismounted and
took it up.

“I pray thee, my lord, give me the
glove,” said Sir Ormus to him. “I will
give him fair chance to redeem it.”

Baron Robert looked him long in the
face, & measured his body with his eyes.
Then gave he the glove over to Sir Or-
mus, and he put it in his belt.



Hold
Red-
mere

SIR ORMUS went to find Geraul, his squire, and together they looked to his armour and their horses, against the time ere the moon set, when

Sir John was to do his best endeavor to redeem the gauntlet. And when everything was ready, Sir Ormus went lightly to meat; being now set to battle for his love, his heart was glad.

Under a lamp in a passage the Lady Cedilia met him, and he bespoke her joyfully, saying that she need have no fear, for the Baron would not make her wed unwillingly. Thereat she clasped him, laughing and weeping, & let cry her heart for the mercy of it. Yet thus her hand fell upon the gage in his belt, and she knew it for Sir John his gage. Then she

Hold looked Ormus in the eyes, saying nought;
Red- and in after time, her face as it was then
mere came back to him often in the night.

In good hour rode Sir Ormus & Geraul out, & set their faces to the north where the river flickered. Over the marches lay stillness, & the moon on the snow-patches trimmed the night's robe with ermine; no breath stirred the leaves that were ripe to rustle, and even the sound of the hoof-beats was unseemly. No word they spoke on the way to the river, nor yet when the water plashed about their stirrups in the ford. Across the river they got off their horses, and waited; the fame of the Venables house came like a ghost & gripped Sir Ormus' heart, but he was not afraid, & There was noise of distant galloping, and black forms of horsemen blocked out the stars above the dune's north reach. Sir John paused at the end

of the level, and Sir Hubert rode to meet Geraul. **Hold
Red-
mere**

“My lord will fight afoot, with sword and shield,” said Geraul. “The light is ill for tilting, and our horses are chilled from the ford.”

“As Sir Ormus wills,” quoth Sir Hubert lightly. So he went back & the two knights came together in the open, having doffed their scabbards and jupons. And then Sir Hubert and Geraul and the pale moon saw such fighting as few kings-at-arms have beheld in open trials.

The knights were in all matters equal save renown, wherein Sir John was by far the greater. But when swords and shields clamor against each other, fame is a distant echo. The moon edged the circling blades with cold fire, and din of battle died on the grim dunes. Thrice they came together, & slashed full mightily for

Hold long time, trasing and traversing full
Red- knightly; & with each bout drawing off
mere and standing apart to breathe deep and wonder.

As they closed in the fourth bout, when the moon was westering low, and the spring had gone out of their sinews for much hacking, Sir John's sword, swinging high, overleapt shield & guard, and shore the thongs of Sir Ormus' helm. Only the leather it cut, for the helm was of tough grey steel that gave out fire but yielded not. But it left the helm loose. Sir Ormus swung again, under the shield, but could not reach the leg. ¶ As he recovered, the helm listed over the left eye. He shook his head to straighten it, turning his face away. Then Sir John his sword flashed in like an unknighly flame — thrusting foully at the face. Through the right eye it clove, under the

nose-piece, and into the left eye-socket. **Hold**
In the instant's wrenching pang Sir Or- **Red-**
mus cried out, & seized the sword with **mere**
his shield hand. Sir John strove to get
it back, but in the leather gauntlet-palm
it stuck fast.

Sir Ormus struck once, blindly, and
his blade clove under the arm to the
pulsing life. The tug at the sword ceas-
ed, & a muffled crash came like the last
fright of a dream. Geraul caught Sir
Ormus in his arms and the blood from
the eyeless face streamed over his
shoulder. Yet Sir Ormus clutched both
swords, and would not let them go till
he swooned.

Sir Hubert de la Cote Dargent covered
Sir John's corse with his cloak, and be-
took himself over the marches to get
friends who would carry it home. Ger-
aul brought water in a helmet to bathe

Hold Sir Ormus his face, and bound a cloth
Red- about his head. Came Sir Ormus' soul
mere back to his body, & he moaned deep for
the pain of blindness; but there was
comfort to him a soldier, for he knew
his last stroke had gone home. & Geraul
set him on his horse, & they rode slowly
back to Hold Redmere, whither the pale
dawn companioned them.



GERAUL shouted as they
came to the moat, and the
clatter of the bascule chains,
aroused Sir Ormus, who
had ridden the long road
unheeding and silent. The
portcullis opened, and they
came into the courtyard. All the castle
was awakened by the falling of the draw-
bridge, and among the first the Baron
Robert greeted them.

"How was it sped?" asked the Baron.

"Sir Ormus fumbled at his belt, and **Hold** gave over the gauntlet to him. The Bar-**Red-**on turned to Geraul, but the lad was like **mere** one walking in a dream — too dazed to heed. After a moment Sir Ormus spoke, and his voice was quavering like a child's.

"I shall not see again, my lord," he said, "but I defended it."

Baron Robert knew that Sir John was fallen, and his heart warmed. So took he Sir Ormus from the horse into his arms, & bore him into the hall, and laid him on a couch of bearskins. As he sat down by the young man's feet a flame lit in his eyes, for he bethought him how the thing must have been done.

"Old Sir John Venables, whose son thou hast fought, had ever a foul trick of foining. I should have warned thee, boy. The thought to thrust is in their blood." & And though he said no more,

Hold he was looking down on Sir Ormus as
Red-tenderly as a woman when the Lady Ce-
meredilia came. She was smiling as she laid
her white hand on the bandage. & Her
father stood up.

“Let the wrappings be, child,” quoth
the Baron. “He will bleed if they be
loosed.”

She looked at him a query; he shook
his head sadly, and went out of the hall.
But still she smiled, though her eyes
were weeping. When she could speak she
bade them all begone, and sat herself
down by him, stroking his hand with
trembling fingers. He started up, and
caught her hands in his.

“I will go, sweet,” he cried. “I am
broken and blinded — and I bless thee
for the love I bear thee. I will go from
Hold Redmere, and thou shalt be free.”

“Nay, I would never be free then —

nor am I now, when I am thine."

His hand clutched hers; his hope rose as her temptation died.

"Ah, Cedilia, if I might — with honour —" he said softly.

"So it shall be," said she, and her smile came again, and there was a light of joy upon her face.

"We shall walk quiet ways, and I shall see for both of us; so shall my hand be in thine, as it likes me well to have it. We can sit together in the spring-time, and the birds that woo will not make mock of us."

He sighed deeply. "The years are long, and I shall never see."

"The years are cruel too, as they are sweet. Thou wilt not know when I am young no longer. & Let us not be sad! Thou wilt not see the winter come into my hair."

Hold
Red-
mere

Here ends the tale, **HOLD REDMERE**
as written by Thomas Wood Stevens
and Alden Charles Noble. Made into a
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